

Message Text

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ACTION SS-20

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0727

FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (HENRY A. KISSINGER), SY

SUBJECT: SHIFT IN OFFICIAL SYRIAN OPINION

1. DEAN BRELIS, CBS, HAS JUST TOLD ME THAT SINCE HE
LAST TALKED TO ME LAST NIGHT THERE HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC TURN
ABOUT IN THE OPINIONS OF HIS CONTACTS AMONG SYRIAN OFFICIALS
AND MILITARY. LAST NIGHT AS I REPORTED TO YOU IN MY EARLIER
CABLE, THESE CONTACTS WERE APPREHENSIVE THAT THE ISRAELIS
WOULD NOT ALLOW YOU TO SUCCEED. NOW THESE SAME CONTACTS ARE
SAYING THAT YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED AND THAT YOU ARE BRINGING
BACK AN AGREEMENT WHICH THE SYRIANS CAN SIGN. THEY
ATTRIBUTE THIS SUCCESS TO "ISRAELI NEED FOR PEACE" AND YOUR
ABILITY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS NEED THROUGH YOUR PATIENCE
AND PERSISTENCE.

2. BRELIS SAID THAT THESE CONTACTS ARE ALSO SAYING THAT THE
MAIN QUESTION FOR THE SYRIANS NOW IS NOT THE LINE WHICH
THEY CAN LIVE WITH BUT SOME SORT OF GUARANTEE FROM THE ISRAELIS
AS TO THEIR LONG-TERM INTENTIONS AT GENEVA. THESE SOURCES
HAVE INDICATED TO BRELIS THAT SOME SORT OF U. S./ USSR
"COMMITMENT" WOULD HELP MAKE THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT
ACCEPTABLE TO PRESIDENT ASAD.

3. THESE CONTACTS HAVE ALSO TOLD BRELIS THAT NO MATTER WHAT
HAPPENS THANKS TO YOUR EFFORTS U.S./SYRIAN RELATIONS
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HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED AND THAT NO DOOR WILL BE CLOSED EVEN

SHOULD YOU FAIL.

4. FINALLY, A MILITARY OFFICER HAS TOLD BRELIS THAT HE
EXPECTS THE "GUNS OF THE GOLAN TO BE SILENT" IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

5. COMMENT: I DO NOT KNOW THE IDENTITY OF BRELIS CONTACTS BUT
FROM HIS DESCRIPTION OF THEM THEY APPEAR TO BE HIGH-
RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, INCLUDING A MAJOR GENERAL.
IN ANY EVENT IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE LINE ABOUT THE GUARANTEE
IS NOW BEING PURVEYED AMONG THE FOREIGN REPORTERS FOLLOWING
THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHAT WITH ISA SABBAGH YESTERDAY.
MEANWHILE, THE GUNS ON THE GOLAN MAY BE SILENT IN A FEW DAYS
BUT RIGHT NOW THE BOOMING AS HEARD IN THE CITY IS QUITE
INTENSE.
SCOTES

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